DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 094 164 95 CE 001 666

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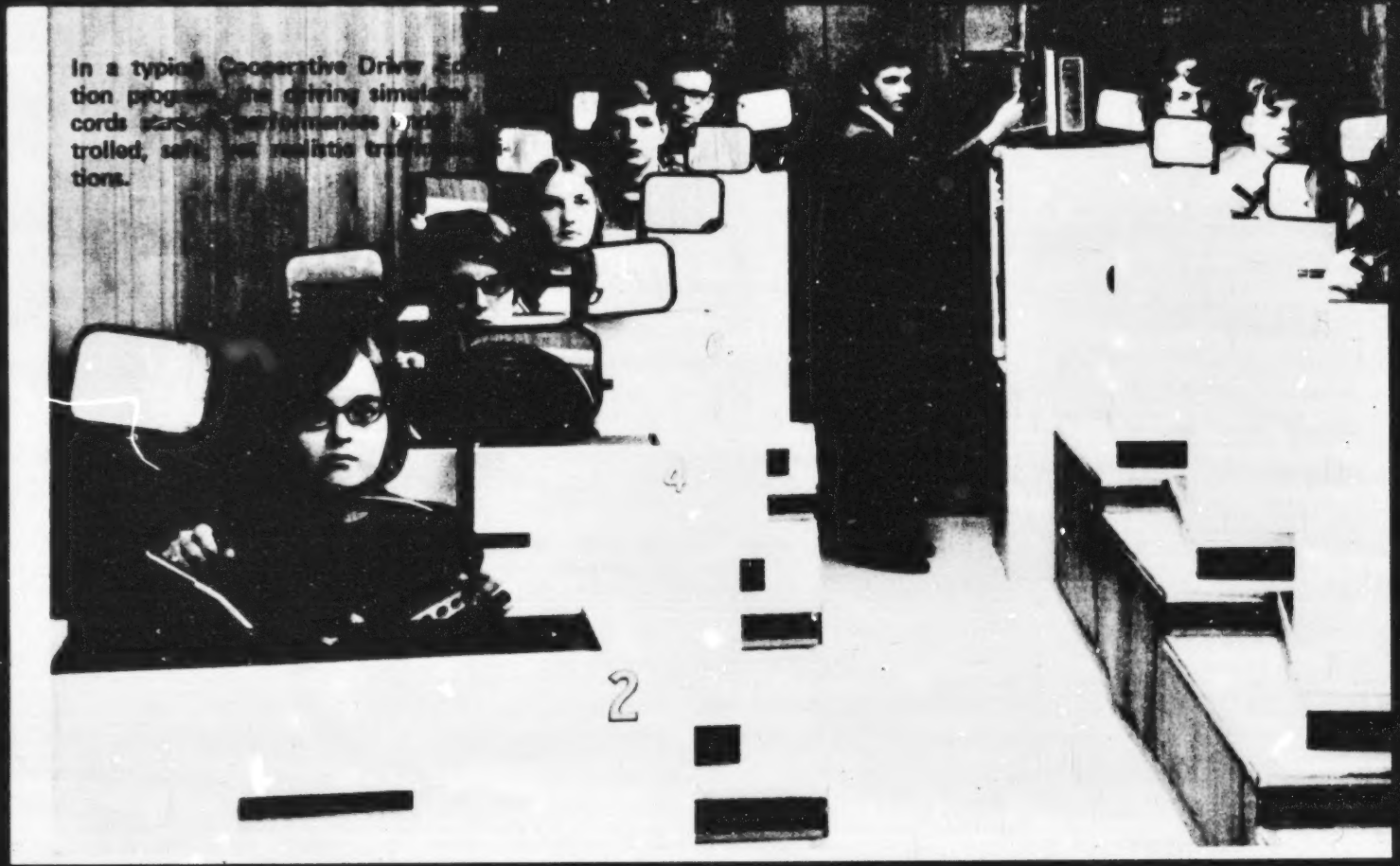
TITLE Cooperative Approach to Driver Education and Traffic Safety Training. Administrator's Adoption Guide.
INSTITUTION Appalachia Educational Lab., Charleston, W. Va.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Lab. Branch.
PUB DATE Jun 72
NOTE 17p.; For instructor's guide, see CE 001 667; for coordinator's guide, see CE 001 668
AVAILABLE FROM Director of Diffusion, Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Inc., P. O. Box 1348, Charleston, West Virginia 25325

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Guides; *Driver Education; Economic Disadvantagement; Educational Finance; Interinstitutional Cooperation; Low Income Counties; Personnel Needs; Program Administration; *Program Costs; *Program Descriptions; Program Guides; *Regional Cooperation; Simulators; Traffic Safety

ABSTRACT

A driver-education approach within the reach of all school systems, even in less-affluent areas, is of concern to many administrators because a number of states have legislated or are considering mandatory driver education. In response to their needs, a comprehensive, cost-saving, and effective plan applicable to all local school districts has been developed and tested. Documentation of the advantages of this cooperative program is offered in the administrative guide, including specific per-pupil cost comparisons, capital investment data, advantages of this cooperative program is offered in the administrative guide., program quality evaluation, a general curriculum description, and a brief discussion of organization. Two companion publications, the coordinator's guide and the instructor's guide, are the basic manuals for the program. (Author/AJ)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A COOPERATIVE APPROACH TO DRIVER EDUCATION AND TRAFFIC SAFETY TRAINING

Administrator's Adoption Guide

Produced by Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Inc., Charleston, W. Va.

June, 1972

CE 001 666

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The Driver-Ed Dilemma

A disproportionate share of the wanton waste of life and property caused by automobile accidents is the responsibility of young drivers.

In response to this disturbing fact, American high schools are placing increased emphasis on driver education and traffic safety training.

To date, however, students in less-affluent school systems have had less opportunity for driver training than their fellows in more prosperous communities. A driver-education approach within the reach of all school systems is of additional concern to many administrators because a number of states have legislated or are considering mandatory driver education. Consequently, school districts in many areas face the dilemma of establishing or expanding driver education within fixed financial bounds.

In response to these needs, the Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Inc., has developed and tested the Cooperative Approach to Driver Education and Traffic Safety Training, a comprehensive, cost-saving and effective plan applicable to all local school districts, regardless of size, location or resources.

For widest application, any basic approach to driver education must have built-in adaptability to diverse school-system situations and requirements. Extensive testing and evaluation indicates that the Cooperative Approach to Driver Education and Traffic Safety Training meets these criteria.

The program is available now, and the Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Inc., recommends it as the practical solution to the school system administrator's driver-ed dilemma.

Program literature is available free upon request to school superintendents and other administrators. In addition to this adoption guide, two companion publications describing the cooperative approach – including full directions for implementation and operation – have been prepared for driver education coordinators and instructors.

The coordinator's guide includes a detailed program description, listing of equipment needs and full specifications, driving range data, tips on acquiring driver-ed automobiles, personnel hiring and training data, program scheduling information, full cost breakdowns and suggested sources of funding assistance.

Included in the instructor's guide are detailed descriptions of classroom events, daily lesson plans, complete listings of free classroom materials and student handouts and a helpful list of equipment and materials sources.

Cooperation Cuts Costs

The overriding consideration, as always, is money. So let's look first at costs.

Much of the expense in conventional driver education and safety instruction programs is related to the low teacher-pupil ratio needed to make such programs effective.

The cooperative approach, employing simulation, range instruction and team teaching (for maximum personnel efficiency), significantly reduces the per-pupil cost.

Tests involving 2,000 students in seven Tennessee school districts demonstrated that, exclusive of administrative costs, a per-pupil cost of $53.72 is attainable through the cooperative approach. The same training offered by the seven systems individually employing the conventional approach would cost $78 per student. (Working individually, and without benefit of coop-innovated equipment and techniques, the schools would spend up to $100 per student.) Per-pupil costs can be further reduced as administrators adapt the cooperative program to their own unique local circumstances.

Where local regulations permit, administrators have found that additional cost advantage can be achieved through the cooperative approach because it can produce the needed results with half the behind-the-wheel driving time scheduled in conventional driver training courses.

Additional savings are achieved at the administrative level through the cooperative approach. For example, a cooperative arrangement will permit one driver education coordinator to supervise the program for all participating school districts, constantly working out bonus economies through efficient use of personnel and equipment sharing by coop members.

Perhaps the major cost advantage of the cooperative approach is operating-expense sharing, since it frees needed money to acquire essential equipment and materials that individual educational units cannot now afford.

While the capital outlay required to implement a cooperative driver education program is substantial (SEE ITEMIZATION TABLE), the confederation approach cushions the initial investment shock by spreading it over several participating educational units. Moreover, that initial capital investment is soon made up in annual savings on personnel costs. The test program conducted by Appalachia Educational Laboratory showed that instructor and supervisor salaries for training 2,000 pupils for one year using conventional driver-education programs were $56,000 higher than salaries needed for the same training using the cooperative approach.

It should also be noted that a sizeable portion of the needed capital is often available from the federal Highway Safety Bureau, state Departments of Education, private foundations and other sources which regularly allocate driver education funds.

(Many such agencies, by the way, prefer to assist with the funding of a progressive new type of program which, once capitalized, can be operated at demonstrable annual savings without loss of effectiveness.)

No Compromise In Quality

According to the National Commission on Safety Education (1964), a quality driver education and safety training program should:

1. Teach young drivers fundamental motoring skills and correct driving habits.

2. Equip pupils with the ability to recognize, analyze and respond to traffic conditions in an appropriate manner.

3. Give the learner understanding of driver and pedestrian limitations, obligations and responsibilities.

4. Condition the beginner to continuously increase his ability to perform in the total traffic environment – physical, social, psychological, moral and legal.

5. Ensure that the student develops a desirable pattern of behavior in traffic society.

6. Teach the pupil to recognize efficient practices in the operation of the motor vehicle transportation system.

These recommendations of the National Commission on Safety Education guided the Appalachia Educational Laboratory in development of the Cooperative Approach to Driver Education and Traffic Safety Training.

How well the cooperative system equips driving students to measure up to National Commission standards has been demonstrated during application of the approach at the Tennessee Appalachia Educational Cooperative in Oak Ridge over the past four years. During that period the program has been carefully monitored and an evaluative study was conducted by the Center for Research and Services in Health and Safety, the University of Tennessee. Students were tested in all areas considered critical by the National Commission on Safety Education, including attitude, objective knowledge, psychophysical performance and driving skills.

The evaluation showed that pupils trained by the cooperative method were comparable to conventionally-trained students in any area. In some areas the cooperative approach proved superior.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN EQUIPMENT NEEDED TO TRAIN 2,000 PUPILS USING THE COOPERATIVE APPROACH TO DRIVER EDUCATION

Item	Cost
Mobile, 12-unit Simulator Vans (3)	$101,175
Aetna Drivocator Multimedia classroom device (1)	9,705
Projectors	2,178
Tractor truck for moving simulators (1)	3,959
Films, filmstrips, reels, screens, etc.	4,000
Miscellaneous equipment	2,500
Textbooks (500)	1,500
Off-street driving range (optional)	56,421
12-passenger van (optional)	3,215
Total	$184,653

How Does It Work?

In a typical application, the Cooperative Approach to Driver Education and Traffic Safety Training involves each student in 50 hours of instruction over a 90-day semester in four phases of instruction (one of which is optional).

For example, some cooperatives have found it advantageous to schedule driver education classes during regular study hall or physical education classes, while others have had success teaching driver education during after-school hours, or even on Saturday.

The key point is, alternatives are open to administrators in every area of implementation and operation of cooperative driver education.

The program is flexible, however, giving school administrators many alternatives in applying cooperative driver education in accordance with local needs, legal restrictions and resources.

The key point is, alternatives are open to administrators in every area of implementation and operation of cooperative driver education.

The following is one program of instruction which emerged as functional during four years of field tests in various cooperative education programs:

CLASSROOM PHASE The first six weeks of the semester are devoted to 30 hours of classroom work. Personnel are utilized most efficiently through rotation, with teachers responsible for classes at more than one school.

SIMULATION PHASE This aspect of the program gives each student five hours of work on the driving simulator if driving range instruction is available. (Simulation time is increased to nine hours if driving-range instruction is not utilized.) In the simulator, the student is seated at a detailed mockup of an automobile interior. Realistic traffic conditions are projected on a screen before the student, and he is required to respond with appropriate actions, including signaling, braking, shifting, steering and decelerating.

Pupil responses are electronically monitored to provide the instructor with a continuing progress report on both individuals and the class as a whole.

Simulation, the key to cutting down the number of behind-the-wheel driving hours required, is taught concurrently with range instruction (when available) and actual experience under traffic conditions. The van-transported simulators, accommodating 12 to 16 students, are moved to participating schools on a predetermined schedule.

RANGE INSTRUCTION PHASE This is the optional phase. Where it is omitted, the cooperative driver education program lengthens the time each student spends on the driving simulator. When utilized, the driving range provides each student hands-on driving practice under minimum-hazard conditions. From 8 to 12 pupils can practice at the same time, depending on the size of the facility. Five hours of such practice is provided.

The decision about whether or not to include range instruction, while largely a budgetary one, should also take into consideration the possible uses for the range when driver instruction is not being conducted.

Existing parking lots and playgrounds, for example, can double as driving ranges.

BEHIND-THE-WHEEL-DRIVING PHASE This part of the program, two or three hours long, involves the instructor-accompanied students in driving on community streets and highways.

During the three laboratory phases (simulation, driving range and behind-the-wheel), the pupil is given experiences in sequence. One day the student will work with the simulator. Out to the driving range he goes the next day for more realistic driving and on the third day he will accompany an instructor in a car into actual traffic.

This cycle is repeated until the student has completed the prescribed number of training hours.

(In some cases it might be practical to bus students to another cooperating school to take advantage of driving range facilities.)

Staff required for the program include one teacher/coordinator, nine teachers, one teacher aide, one part-time secretary/bookkeeper and one part-time electrical maintenance and simulator moving man.

The program features staggered scheduling of the laboratory instruction phases at different schools, making it possible to serve all cooperating schools with a minimum of expensive equipment. One mobile simulator, for example, serves 13 schools.

Organizing Cooperative Driver-Ed

While the Cooperative Approach to Driver Education and Traffic Safety Training is based on thorough evaluation of an operative program, it is not the purpose of the program literature to set down rigid rules for implementation. Instead, school system administrators are encouraged to adapt and apply the cooperative approach in terms of local requirements, resources and applicable state and local regulations.

The organizational structure that has worked best in operational programs, however, utilizes some form of basic cooperative structure in which the superintendents of the participating school districts comprise the board of directors. In this arrangement, a driver education coordinator is hired to administer the program. (Frequently the coordinator doubles as an instructor.)

Generally speaking, the typical cooperative driver education program is centrally administered, crossing several school district lines. It is not an arrangement where each district has day-to-day responsibility for the program. This gives the driver education coordinator sufficient autonomy to administer the program efficiently and relieves individual superintendents of involvement with time-consuming details.

Experience has shown that the cooperative structure, once it has been established for driver education, generally lends itself to further utilization by cooperating school districts in a variety of service and teaching areas.

In organizing the educational cooperative to implement driver education (and other programs), it is advisable that the board of directors establish personnel employment policies and other procedures. Suggested policies and implementation instructions have been prepared and are included in the companion publications for driver education coordinators and instructors.

TO OBTAIN THESE PUBLICATIONS OR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE COOPERATIVE APPROACH TO DRIVER EDUCATION AND TRAFFIC SAFETY TRAINING, WRITE:

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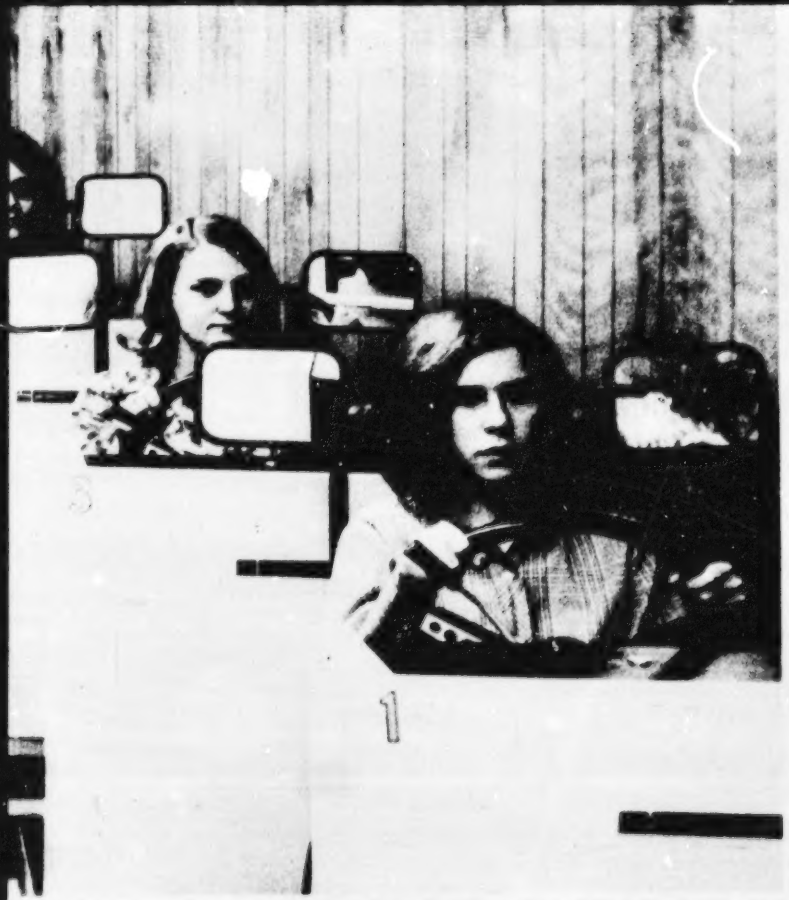

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